(b) Discussions are at preliminary stage. A feasibility report by BHP Billiton is an input in the discussions.

(c) Yes, Sir. This was followed by technical discussions in Delhi on 14-15 February, which are to be resumed in Tehran on 5 March.

(d) The import of natural gas by pipeline from well-endowed sources to the West and East of India are indispensable to ensuring the nation's energy security. Abdundant gas availability will significantly trigger maximum investment in industrialization and electrification, and is, therefore, essential to our attaining and sustaining the targeted growth rate in GDP of 7%-8% perannum.

Gas Pipeline Policy

102. SHRI LALITBHAIMEHTA:
SHRIMATISAVITASHARDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of a new Gas Pipeline Policy to put up a National Gas Grid;

(b) whether the representation to have a two-tier regulatory structure has been received from the State Government of Gujarat;

(c) whether Government are agreeable to leave transmission part to a State level regulator exclusively; and

(d) by when, the new Gas Pipeline Policy shall be finalized?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The salient features of the proposed Policy are as follows:—

1. All the natural gas pipelines will be laid in accordance with the Authorization granted by the Regulator, under a transparent mechanism.

2. Regulator shall develop a comprehensive set of technical standards and safety standard as well as a code for grid connectivity.

3. Progressive unbundling of transmission activity.

4. Authorization to the proposer may be cancelled with forfeiture of his security deposit, if the conditions of the authorization are not adhered to or the project is delayed beyond the stipulated milestone(s).

5. The designed pipeline capacity to be at least 25% percent more than the maximum capacity requirement of the proposer and all those who tie up for capacity. Such capacity would be made available on 'open access basis' at transportation rates not more than the ceiling rate approved by the regulator.

6. A National Advisory Council (NAC) shall be constituted by Government to advise the Government and the Regulator on all matters relating to this Policy.

7. The pipelines will be used by all players on non-discriminatory basis.

8. Tariff for the transmission pipeline and/or for the distribution pipelines would be approved by the Regulator as a ceiling.

9. Government to prepare a 10 year perspective plan in consultation with State Government to be revised from time to time. The Plan will be kept in mind while approving new pipelines.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No time frame has been fixed for this purpose.

Allocation of Natural Gas to Gujarat

103. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Ministerof PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state: